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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BEIJING 024538

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [UNSC](#) [ASEAN](#) [BM](#) [CH](#)

SUBJECT: URGING CHINA TO ACCEPT UNSC RESOLUTION ON BURMA

REF: A. BEIJING 24497

[1](#)B. STATE 197809

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Dan
Shields. Reasons 1.4 (b/d)

Summary

[1](#)1. (C) China should reconsider its opposition to a UN Security Council Resolution on Burma, Polmincouns stressed to MFA Deputy Director General for Southeast Asia Tong Xiaoling on December 14. The situation in Burma is harming the peace and security of the region. Tong said China remains opposed to a resolution. Separately, the Chinese warned the French Charge that China has used its veto rarely but might do so on a Burma resolution. A lower-ranking MFA official told the French that China remains open to a "strong" Presidential Statement. End Summary.

Interference in Internal Affairs of Burma

[1](#)2. (C) China should reconsider its opposition to a UN Security Council Resolution on Burma, Polmincouns stressed to incoming MFA Deputy Director General for Southeast Asia Tong Xiaoling on December 14. The situation in Burma is harming the peace and security of the region. Polmincouns urged that Tong's Asia Department to work with the MFA's International Organization's Department to shift China's approach to one that supports a resolution, supports U/SYG Gambari's efforts under the Secretary General's good offices mission and complements ASEAN's call for tangible steps toward democracy and national reconciliation in Burma, including the release of political prisoners. (Note: This discussion followed up on Ref A demarche, using Ref B points, to the MFA International Organizations Department.) Tong said China remains opposed to a resolution. Beijing will stand by its policy of non-interference in Burma's internal affairs and does not agree with the United States' position that Burma's situation constitutes a threat to regional stability.

[1](#)3. (C) Tong said ASEAN's priority has been to help Rangoon carry out national reconciliation. ASEAN occasionally has sent envoys to talk with the regime, but does not want too much "fanfare" on Burma, a position Beijing shares. China does not generally discuss Burma in its meetings with ASEAN, but discusses Burma in regional forums like ASEAN-Plus-Three or the ASEAN Regional Forum when governments like Japan or the ROK raise the matter, she said.

14. (C) Tong said China believes Burma should come up with a plan that demonstrates the regime's willingness to cooperate with the UN and international community and that increases the international community's confidence. The United States and Burma need to find a way to establish greater trust, she said. Polmincouns said the Burmese regime's policies are the root of the problem. A UNSC resolution is the way to move forward.

French: PRC Open To Presidential Statement But Could Veto

15. (C) French Embassy Political Counselor Erkki Maillard told us late December 14 that an MFA official referred to a possible veto of the Burma resolution in a discussion with the French CDA on another matter. The MFA official said that China "has cast its veto before and would consider doing it again" when explaining PRC opposition to a Burma resolution, according to Maillard, who characterized the PRC as concerned that a Burma resolution would open the door to further resolutions on the basis of human rights and narcotics issues. Beijing is concerned about the impact of a resolution on its relations with Burma, Maillard said. He commented that the PRC position appeared to have hardened since December 13, when a lower-ranking official hinted at a possible veto while stressing PRC desire to avoid a divisive vote.

16. (C) Maillard said he had followed up on the French Charge's meeting to ask MFA IO Department UN Affairs Division Director Yang Tao whether China would be

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willing to support a "tough" Presidential Statement. According to Maillard, Yang expressed interest in a PRST and understood fully that it would have to be "tough."

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